

Examiner's Amendment to specification

ENTERLINK CONDUCTOR FOR PROVIDING A FEDERATED BUSINESS TO BUSINESS SYSTEM THAT INTERCONNECTS APPLICATIONS OF MULTIPLE COMPANIES

This is a continuation-in-part of a co-pending U.S. Patent Application Serial

Number 09/761,834, for the "Enterlink", filed January 18, 2001, by Hellbusch et al, *for providing a federated business to business system that interconnects applications of multiple companies*
now U.S. Patent No. 6,547,420.

Field of the Invention

5 This invention relates to data, software, and computer system architecture. Specifically, this invention relates to a data, software, and computer system architecture that interconnects applications of multiple enterprises into a single federated system.

Background of the Invention

10 Electronic communication among enterprises such as vendors and suppliers is currently accomplished through networks, including private networks and through public networks, such as the Internet. A participant in the network establishes a connection to the network, and is thus able to transmit a communication, such as an electronic message, to another participant in the data network. The data network delivers the communication
15 from the source participant to the destination participant.

The primary alternative used today for connecting enterprises into a network is a combination of centralized and distributed architectures. A centralized architecture is characterized by a central node, or hub, through which all communications pass. A distributed architecture, on the other hand, provides multiple hubs through which electronic
20 communication may be routed, instead of using a single, central hub. However, whether an architecture is centralized or distributed, the current methods for connecting enterprises suffer from the inability to maintain the overall state of the network.